



The Effects of Sports Betting on the Moral Behaviours of Students in Colleges of Education in Ghana

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the effects of sports betting on the moral behaviour of students in Colleges of Education in Ghana. A descriptive research design was adopted for the study. Using the multi-stage technique involving proportionate and simple random sampling procedures, three hundred and two (302) students from five colleges of Education in Ghana. Questionnaires were the instruments used in collecting data for the study. The data was analysed through the computation of frequency counts, and percentages, as well as means and standard deviations. The study demonstrated that students had a positive perception of the effects of sports betting on their moral behaviours. They believed that sports betting was not immoral, that it might be profitable and that it was only beneficial to those who understood how it worked. The students were unsure as to whether sports betting was against their religious beliefs or if it was only for slothful people who did not want to work. Despite these, the students mentioned that sports betting can be addictive; it is a very risky business, and people despise those that bet. Thus the study concluded that even though sports betting appears lucrative, it is addictive and can cause more harm than good. It recommended the necessity of Guidance and Counselling Units on Colleges of Education campuses running programs to inform students about exaggerated claims about the advantages of sports betting and the negative effects of sports betting. This study contributes to the body of knowledge on the phenomena of sports betting by presenting a contextual view of the activity, particularly among young Ghanaian college students.

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INTRODUCTION

Gambling is defined as "risking something, notably money, on an occasion with an unknown result with the intention of obtaining more substantial commodities and or money."¹ A type of gambling activity that has developed over time is sports betting. Sports betting during sporting events, however, is a relatively new activity. Unlike in the past, when one could only physically wager on the outcome of a horse (or greyhound) race, several bookmakers have since expanded their offerings to include

¹ Mark Dickerson and John O'Connor, *Gambling as an Addictive Behaviour: Impaired Control, Harm Minimisation, Treatment and Prevention* (Cambridge University Press, 2006).

wagers on the outcome of team sports. Ghana is not an exception to the current increase in global popularity of the legalised form of sports betting.²

Because of the alleged case of immorality attached to it, sports betting was previously not widely discussed in Ghana and many other African nations.³ Sports betting has however, currently become a reality in Ghana thanks to Ghanaians' love of watching European football matches from leagues like the English Premier League, the Spanish La Liga, and other leagues around the world. The majority of the elderly used to share this passion for European soccer matches, but the youth now rule this space.⁴ Sports betting has become more prevalent among young people as a result of growing advertising-driven global sports betting deregulation. Many young people are drawn to sports betting because the media and advertising organisations present it as lucrative, attractive, fashionable, and sensual.⁵

However, when a lot of recent graduates from senior high school and junior high school participate in sports betting, it creates an issue. This is due to the fact that most of these abandoners are under 18 years old.⁶ Some subscribers develop an addiction to the practice, which causes them to lose their possessions.⁷ Others also commit suicide as a result of developing an addiction to the behaviour when they lose a bet. For instance, a 30-year-old man killed himself in 2011 in Accra as a result of a lost wager. This individual said in a note that he had written that he had given up on life since he had sold his car and other belongings to wager on sports, which he had lost. The Gaming Commission of Ghana reports that in 2014, 34% of young people bet on sports, and that number rose to 70% in 2016. This suggests that a higher proportion of Ghanaian youth participate in sports betting, necessitating empirical research into the topic.⁸

Few studies on sports betting have been conducted in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), where the majority of research has been conducted in Western nations.⁹ The majority of the research conducted in SSA has been on the benefits of sports betting to society.¹⁰ Sewor carried out a study on the gaming business in Ghana: casino employment and its direct benefit to residents of host communities.¹¹ Botwe did a critical assessment of online sports betting/gambling and its terrible implications on the Ghanaian youth.¹² These studies, however, were conducted elsewhere besides the institutions of education in the Bono, Bono East and Ahafo Regions of Ghana, which was what this study aimed to do. Angelo and Yeboah investigated sports wagering among college students in Ghana's Ashanti Region, yet, their

² Gerda Reith, "Beyond Addiction or Compulsion: The Continuing Role of Environment in the Case of Pathological Gambling," 2012.

³ Roger Dunstan, *Gambling in California*, vol. 97 (California Research Bureau, California State Library, 1997).

⁴ Michael Karikari Appiah and Freeman Awuah, "Socio-Cultural and Environmental Determinants of Youth Gambling: Evidence from Ghana," *British Journal of Psychology Research* 4, no. 4 (2016): 12–23; Sally M Monaghan and Jeffrey Derevensky, "An Appraisal of the Impact of the Depiction of Gambling in Society on Youth," *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction* 6 (2008): 537–50.

⁵ Appiah and Awuah, "Socio-Cultural and Environmental Determinants of Youth Gambling: Evidence from Ghana."

⁶ News Ghana, "Man Hangs Himself at Lapaz after Losing Bet on Barcelona," <https://newsghana.com.gh>, April 25, 2012, <https://newsghana.com.gh/man-hangs-himself-at-lapaz-after-losing-bet-on-barcelona/>.

⁷ Reith, "Beyond Addiction or Compulsion: The Continuing Role of Environment in the Case of Pathological Gambling."

⁸ The Gaming Commission of Ghana (2017).

⁹ Prince Chikotora, "Motives for Gambling in Sports Betting among Gweru Residents," 2016.

¹⁰ Jeffrey L Derevensky and Lynette Gilbeau, "Adolescent Gambling: Twenty-Five Years of Research," *Canadian Journal of Addiction* 6, no. 2 (2015): 4–12; Anne Greig, Jayne Taylor, and Tommy MacKay, *Doing Research with Children: A Practical Guide* (1 Oliver's Yard, 55 City Road London EC1Y 1SP : SAGE Publications, Ltd, 2013), <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781526402219>; Alun C Jackson et al., "Using the CPGI to Determine Problem Gambling Prevalence in Australia: Measurement Issues," *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction* 8 (2010): 570–82.

¹¹ Samuel Sewor, "The Gaming Industry in Ghana: Casino Employment and Its Direct Benefit to Residents of Host Communities (A Study of Casino Employment in Osu)" (University of Ghana, 2019).

¹² Mercy Anning Adjoa Botwe, "A Critical Assessment of Online Sports Betting/Gambling and Its Dire Consequences on the Ghanaian Youth" (Ghana Institute of Journalism, 2020).

study was conducted among college students in the Ashanti Region of Ghana.¹³ It is obvious that there is no research on the topic so far as the Bono, Bono East and Ahafo Regions of Ghana are concerned. To close this gap, this study was done to investigate the effects of sports betting on the moral behaviours of students in the colleges of education in Ghana. The study looks for answers to the following research questions: “What are the effects of sports betting on the moral behaviours of students?”; “What are the motivations for sports betting among college of education students; and “What are the effects of sports betting on the academic performance of students in the colleges of education”. The study involved students from St. Joseph College of Education; Berekum College of Education; St. Ambrose College of Education; Atebubu College of Education and Al-Faruq College of Education in the Bono, Bono East and Ahafo Regions of Ghana. The findings of this investigation will help people better comprehend sports betting. With this knowledge, suitable policies and interventions can be developed to lessen the negative effects of sports betting on students and young people nationwide.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Prevalence of Sports Betting

According to the Gaming Commission of Ghana's (2017) report, youths between the ages of 18 and 35 who gamble, increased from thirty-four per cent (34%) (nearly 900,000 youth) in 2014 to about seventy per cent (70%) (about 1,500,000 youth) in 2016.¹⁴ According to the survey, sixty-nine percent (69%) of these young people wager an average of 26 Ghana cedis per week, and some even commit suicide after losing a bet. This begs the question of why, with all the issues involved in betting, people still do it.

Sports fans who attend sporting events, view games online, listen to radio commentary, or watch games live on television are the most common participants in sports betting.¹⁵ Due to this passion, several sports betting establishments have sprung up all over the world, allowing sports fans to wager on events like boxing, golf, rugby, ice hockey, tennis, basketball, volleyball, table tennis, and virtual sports. These betting options include a wide range of possibilities, like the number of goals a game would produce, over and under sets, which side would receive the next point or the virtual horse that would triumph in a virtual race.¹⁶

Motivations for Students' Engagement in Sports Betting

Neighbors and Lostutter identified some reasons provided by college students who engage in betting.¹⁷ The results indicate that participants bet to gain money, as a means of dealing with boredom, for pleasure and entertainment. Keovisai and Wooksoo believe that betting produces some sense of excitement that ignites different feelings among the participants.¹⁸ Volberg et al. in qualitative research identified competition among peers as a reason for their involvement in sports betting.¹⁹ They continue that among the reasons, there is the demonstration of loyalty to favourite teams and players and the

¹³E.O. Angelo, E. Oand Anthony, Yeboah. “Sports betting among students of colleges of education in the Ashanti Region of Ghana” *European Journal of Education and Pedagogy* 2, no. 5(2021), 33-39.

¹⁴ The Gaming Commission. “Annual Report on Gaming and Related Activities. Accra, Ghana: Labour Commission of Ghana, 2017.

¹⁵ Jeffrey L. Derevensky and Rina Gupta, “Adolescents with Gambling Problems: A Synopsis of Our Current Knowledge,” *Journal of Gambling Issues*, no. 10 (February 1, 2004), <https://doi.org/10.4309/jgi.2004.10.3>.

¹⁶ Anna Bussu and Claudio Detotto, “The Effect of Socio-Economic and Emotional Factors on Gambling Behaviour,” 2013.

¹⁷ Clayton Neighbors et al., “Measuring Gambling Outcomes among College Students,” *Journal of Gambling Studies* 18 (2002): 339–60.

¹⁸ Mary Keovisai and Wooksoo Kim, “‘It’s Not Officially Gambling’: Gambling Perceptions and Behaviors Among Older Chinese Immigrants,” *Journal of Gambling Studies* 35, no. 4 (December 18, 2019): 1317–30, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10899-019-09841-4>.

¹⁹ Rachel A Volberg et al., “An International Perspective on Youth Gambling Prevalence Studies,” *International Journal of Adolescent Medicine and Health* 22, no. 1 (2010): 3–38.

display of intelligence in their knowledge of the game. Keovisai and Wooksoo, also explain that some people use betting as a coping strategy, for socialization purposes and as a means of displaying their luck or skill. Similarly, some people resort to betting as a means of dealing with stressors in life.²⁰ The betting experience is capable of providing an emotional or mental escape.

The reasons for betting also have societal and financial remuneration hopes as key. There is the provision of conducive environments that enhance social and peer-group interactions. Some of these unemployed youth resort to betting as their main means of income, since winning money appears very vital than mere enjoyment of the game. Rodriguez et al. speak of recent research also suggesting betting for financial gains and charitable events as regularly cited explanations for betting.²¹ Wojcik and Hodge also indicate financial motivations as the reason behind students' betting, with many wanting to supplement their income as they experience rising living costs.²² Students who gamble express concern about the worrying nature of their financial situations. They only engage in the act to help ease and improve their finances on campus.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A descriptive survey study approach was used to examine student perceptions of sports betting. Particularly, descriptive cross-sectional survey research was used. The major tool used to gather data for this study was a questionnaire. In this study, a series of self-created questionnaires (for students) were used. The tool was chosen because it provides responders with a stronger assurance of secrecy and anonymity. An objective of a study using a descriptive research design is to produce a true representation of the people, events, and circumstances.²³ By accumulating precise, factual data, a descriptive research design aims to define an existing phenomenon. It can be utilised with greater assurance when posing specific questions of interest and can help to get a good number of responses from a varied range of respondents.²⁴ Descriptive surveys have several disadvantages such as the time and effort needed to guarantee a representative sample and the difficulty in conducting them because they need more time despite these advantages.²⁵ A questionnaire for responses is only allowed to have a certain amount of questions.²⁶ The method was chosen for this study because it allows the researcher the ability to assess, monitor, and characterise the effects of sports betting on the moral behaviours of students in the colleges of education at a specific time.

Population

According to Kothari, population refers to all the items from which the necessary data can be gathered. All final-year students in the colleges of education in the Bono, Bono East and Ahafo Regions made up the study's population. There were five colleges of education (St. Joseph College of Education; Berekum College of Education; St. Ambrose College of Education; Atebubu College of Education and Al-Faruq College of Education) in the Bono, Bono East and Ahafo Regions of Ghana, with a combined enrollment of 1,432 student teachers in 2022/2023.

²⁰ A. K. Masaba et al., "The Social-Economic Impact of Sports Betting on Ugandan Youths," *Global Advanced Research Journal of Social Science* 5, no. 1 (2016): 20–26.

²¹ Lindsey M Rodriguez et al., "Motivational Profiles of Gambling Behavior: Self-Determination Theory, Gambling Motives, and Gambling Behavior," *Journal of Gambling Studies* 31 (2015): 1597–1615.

²² Mike Wojcik and Sarah Hodge, *How Gaming & Gambling Affect Student Life Young Gamers and Gamblers Education Trust* (London: Young Gamers and Gamblers Education Trust, 2019), www.ygam.org%7Chello@ygam.org%7C0203.

²³ John W Best and James V Kahn, *Research in Education* (Pearson Education India, 2016).

²⁴ B. N. Ghosh, *Scientific Method and Social Research* (New Delhi : Sterling Publishing, 1984), <https://books.google.com.gh/books?id=IBs3XwAACAAJ>.

²⁵ Mark N. K. Saunders et al., "Understanding Research Philosophy and Approaches to Theory Development," 2015.

²⁶ Best and Kahn, *Research in Education*.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

The sample size for students in the colleges of education in the Bono, Bono East and Ahafo Regions of Ghana was chosen using the Krejcie and Morgan table for calculating sample size.²⁷ 302 students from the five colleges of education in the Bono, Bono East and Ahafo Regions— St. Joseph College of Education; Berekum College of Education; St. Ambrose College of Education; Atebubu College of Education and Al-Faruq College of Education—made up the study's sample. Three hundred and two (302) students from the five institutions of education in the Bono, Bono East and Ahafo Regions of Ghana were chosen for the study using the multi-stage sampling method. First, the Education Information Management System was used to acquire a list of all five institutions of education in the Bono, Bono East and Ahafo Regions (2022). Second, a list of every student in each college who is in their last year was acquired. The third phase involved proportionally distributing the sample size among each college so that colleges with large populations obtained large samples. To do this, the total population of final-year students in each college was divided by the total population for all five colleges of education (1,432), and the result was multiplied by the total sample size of all the colleges of education for the study, which was 302. Until the whole sample for each of the five institutions of education was gathered, this technique was used on all five. Finally, the final-year students for the study were chosen using a simple random selection approach, especially the lottery method. Each respondent had a fair chance of being chosen thanks to this sampling process.²⁸ Using this method, the responders from the various institutes of education were handed pieces of paper with the words "Yes" and "No" written on them. Those who selected "Yes" took part in the research.

Research Instruments

Once more, a questionnaire is described as a structured tool for collecting data from a large number of respondents in the shortest amount of time possible, especially when the population is easily available and interviewing every subject in the study is not financially or logistically feasible.²⁹

A structured questionnaire was used in this study to collect data from the respondents in light of the aforementioned. The surveys, which were of the closed-ended variety and were written on a five-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree (SD), 2= Disagree (D), 3= Uncertain (U), 4= Agree (A), and 5= Strongly Agree), were designed to ensure a quick and simple answer to the items (SA). Consequently, both descriptive and inferential statistics might be used to analyse the data.

There were 25 items total in the four sections of the students' survey (A, B, C & D). Two (2) items in the A section were designed to learn more about the respondents' demographic details. The eight (8) items in Section B were all part of the study's effort to learn more about students' attitudes toward sports betting. Seven (7) elements made up Section C, which examined why students gambled on sports. Sports gambling's impact on students' academic achievement was examined in Section D with eight (8) items.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

A validity and reliability test was performed on the research tool. The degree to which theory and evidence support the interpretation of test results implied by the use of tests is referred to as validity. The degree to which an instrument accurately measures the target variable is a measure of its validity. Both face and content validity tests were performed on the instrument. The questionnaire was given to specialists to analyse and determine whether the items measure the desired characteristic or trait to ensure face validity. The experts who were also knowledgeable about the research's focus construct

²⁷ Robert V. Krejcie and Daryle W. Morgan, "Determining Sample Size for Research Activities," *Educational and Psychological Measurement* 30, no. 3 (September 2, 1970): 607–10, <https://doi.org/10.1177/001316447003000308>.

²⁸ K Asamoah-Gyimah and Felix Duodu, "Introduction to Research Methods in Education," *Winneba: The Institute of Educational Development and Extension, University of Education, Winneba*, 2007.

²⁹ E. C. Osuala, "Introduction to Research Methodology Onitsha: Africana" (First Publishers, 2005); R F DeVellis, *Scale Development: Theory and Applications*, Applied Social Research Methods (SAGE Publications, 2016), <https://books.google.com.gh/books?id=48ACCwAAQBAJ>.

examined the questionnaire items for readability, clarity, and comprehensiveness in terms of content validity, and lastly concluded on the items which should be part of the final questionnaire.

At the Holy Child College of Education in Ghana's Western Region, twenty-five (25) student teachers were given the questionnaires as part of a pilot test. This is due to Holy Child College of Education's student teachers participating in the same supported teaching in schools program as other institutions of education in Ghana's Bono, Bono East and Ahafo Regions. For each of the items that come under the two research questions set to direct the study, the data collected was analysed, and Cronbach's alpha was established. For the perceptions constructions and the construct on obstacles faced by student teachers during the assisted teaching in schools program, respectively, Cronbach's alpha values were .72 and .82. According to Fraenkel and Wallen, dependability should be at least .70 and preferably higher for research purposes.³⁰ As a result, it could be claimed that the equipment was of high quality and capable of gathering pertinent data for the study.

Data Analysis

This study sought to examine the effects of sports betting on the moral behaviours of students in Colleges of Education in the Bono, Bono East and Ahafo Regions of Ghana. The analysis of the data used descriptive statistics to respond to the research questions developed to direct the study. Study questions 1, 2, and 3 were specifically examined using the data from the questionnaires through the computation of frequency counts, percentages, and mean of means distributions. Version 25 of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences was used in the computation of the results for the analyses.

RESULTS/FINDINGS

The background information of the respondents was assessed and provided first. Then, the research questions served as the study's guiding principles. The characteristics of the respondents of the survey, who were students at the colleges of education in Ghana's Bono, Bono East and Ahafo Regions, are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Characteristics of the students

Variable	Subscale	No.	%
Gender	Male	101	33.4
	Female	201	66.6
Age	16-19 years	215	71.2
	20-29 years	87	28.8

Source: Field Data, 2022

Table 1 shows that 66.6% of the 302 student instructors who participated in the study were female and 33.4% were male. There were several female student teachers. Once more, the majority of the student respondents were within the 16–19 age range. This is because 215 (71.2%) were between the ages of 16 and 19, while 87 (28.8%) were between the ages of 20 and 29.

The findings and analyses of the information gathered to address the three research questions made to direct the study are presented in this section. It contained information gathered from the students' questionnaires.

Effects of sports betting on the moral behaviours of Students in the Colleges of Education

Research question 1: What are the effects of sports betting on the moral behaviours of students in the colleges of education?

³⁰ Jack R Fraenkel and Norman E Wallen, *How to Design and Evaluate Research in Education* (New York: McGraw-hill, 2012).

This research objective sought to find out from the students the effects of sports betting on their moral behaviours in the Colleges of Education in the Bono, Bono East and Ahafo Regions of Ghana. The responses given by the students are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Effects of sports betting on the moral behaviours of students in the colleges of education

Statements: What are your views on the effects of sports betting on the moral behaviours of students?	M	SD
Sports betting is an immoral act.	2.17	.41
Sports betting is against my religious doctrines.	2.63	.59
Sports betting can be addictive.	4.63	.51
Sports betting is for lazy people who do not want to work.	3.37	.61
People look down on persons who bet.	4.23	.49
Sports betting is a very risky venture.	4.47	.50
Sports betting is good but only for people who understand how it works.	4.40	.63
Sports betting can be lucrative.	4.67	.68

Source: Field Data, 2022

Scale:

1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Uncertain,
4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

Mean of means = 3.82

Mean of standard deviation = .55

A mean of 3.82 and a mean standard deviation of .55 were obtained, according to Table 2. This indicates that the majority of the comments made to the students about how college students see sports betting were generally accepted. Based on the replies recorded for each of the questions on the questionnaire that were presented to the respondents, the means and standard deviation were calculated (students). The following paragraphs give more specifics about each component.

The majority of students disagreed with the assertion that they thought sports betting was an immoral activity. This resulted in a mean of 2.17 and a standard deviation of .41. The results also show that the majority of students were unsure whether gambling on sports violated their religious beliefs. It is possible to deduce that the mean falls into the range of 3 with a mean of 2.63 and a standard deviation of .59 (uncertain). Again, when asked if sports betting can be addictive, the respondents firmly agreed with the claim. The results for this item showed a mean of 4.63 and a standard deviation of .51, indicating that the respondents highly agreed with the statement. Additionally, based on Table 2, the respondents weren't sure if sports betting was only for slothful people who didn't want to work. This is demonstrated by the item's mean score of 3.37 and standard deviation of .61. The mean is roughly 3, indicating that the respondents weren't sure how they felt about the assertion.

The majority of respondents agreed with the statement "People look down on those who bet" in this regard. This is evident from the actualized mean of 4.23 and standard deviation of .49. The item "Sports betting is a venture that is exceedingly dangerous" also had a mean of 4.47 and a standard deviation of .50. This indicates that the vast majority of students concurred with this assertion. This is as a result of the mean falling on a scale 4 (agree), according to Table 2's scale. The majority of respondents agreed with the statement "Sports betting is good but only for persons who understand how it works." This is seen by the actual mean of 4.40 and standard deviation of .63. The majority of respondents resoundingly agreed with the assertion that "Sports betting may be lucrative." This is evident from the results, which showed a mean of 4.67 and a standard deviation of 0.68.

From the aforementioned debates, it can be inferred that the students' opinions about the effects of sports betting on the moral behaviours of students were favourable. They believed that wagering on sports was not unethical, that gambling could be lucrative, and that it was beneficial—but only for those who understood how it worked. The students weren't sure, though, whether gambling on sports

was against their religious beliefs or if it was only for slothful people who didn't want to work. Despite these, the students mentioned that sports betting can be addictive, it is a very risky business, and people despise those that bet.

Motivations for Sports Betting among College of Education Students

Research question 2: What are the motivations for sports betting among college of education students? The aim of this research objective sought to find out the motivations for sports betting among college of education students. The responses given by the students are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Motivations for Sports Betting among College of Education Students

Statements:	M	SD
Sports betting provides an opportunity for people to win money to earn a living.	4.53	.51
For entertainment.	4.23	.48
As a hobby.	4.20	.41
Out of curiosity.	3.67	.90
Because my peers are also doing it.	4.30	.87
It is a way of getting rid of stress.	4.37	.60
It's an easy way to make money.	4.07	.73

Source: Field Data 2022

Scale:

1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3 = Uncertain,
 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree

Mean of means = 4.20

Mean of standard deviation = 0.64

In Table 3, it was determined why college students studying education in the Bono, Bono East and Ahafo Regions bet on sports. Based on the replies recorded for each of the questions on the questionnaire that were presented to the respondents, the means and standard deviation were calculated. The average of the means was 4.20 while the average standard deviation was.64. This indicates that the majority of the students concurred with most of the claims made regarding the reasons why they bet on sports. The sentences following provide more explanations of each item.

The statement "Sports betting provides an opportunity for people to make money to earn a life" had a mean of 4.53 and a standard deviation of.51 from Table 3. This indicates that the pupils firmly agreed with this assertion. The same thing happened when the students were asked if they gambled on sports for entertainment purposes. The replies concurred. This item's mean score was 4.23 and its standard deviation was.48, indicating that the respondents in this case agreed with the statement. The students also concurred, according to Table 3, that they enjoyed betting on sports. This is demonstrated by the item's mean score of 4.20 and standard deviation of.41. The mean is roughly 4, indicating that the respondents approved of the assertion. In response to the remark, the majority of pupils agreed with it out of curiosity. This is evident from the actualized mean of 3.67 and standard deviation of.90. The significant standard deviation found suggests that the responses that were recorded for the item varied. Moreover, a standard deviation of 0.87 and a mean of 4.30 implies that most of the students were engaged in gambling because their friends were also doing the same.

The phrase, "Because my peers are also doing it" received 87 responses. This indicates that the statement was accepted by the majority of the students. This is as a result of the mean falling on scale 4 (agreed), according to Table 3's scale. The results show that the majority of students concurred that their purpose for participating in sports betting was to relieve stress. With a standard deviation of.60 and a mean of 4.37, it is possible to infer that the mean is on a scale of 4. (agree). Again, the respondents

concurrent with the statement when asked if people bet on sports because gambling is a simple way to make money. Here, the statement had a mean of 4.07 and a standard deviation of .73.

From the comments above, it can be inferred that there were a variety of reasons why students bet on sports in institutes of education. Among the reasons given were that it gives people a chance to win money to support themselves, for fun or as a pastime, and that the students start betting out of curiosity. Students gamble on sports because it is popular among their classmates, because it relieves tension, and because it is a simple way to make money.

Effects of sports betting on the academic performance of Students in Colleges of Education

Research question 3: What are the effects of sports betting on the academic performance of students in colleges of education?

The aim of this research objective sought to find out the effects of sports betting on the academic performance of students in colleges of education. The responses given by the student teachers are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Effect of sports betting on the academic performance of students in the colleges of education

Statements:	M	SD
Sports betting reduces my academic performance in school.	4.17	.41
Reduces my concentration in class.	4.53	.63
Sports betting makes me spend monies that should have been spent on educational materials.	4.23	.36
I have to starve at times when I spend my last on sports betting.	4.30	.35
Loss of sports bet puts me in such a bad mood that I am unable to learn.	4.07	.28
I have lost interest in education due to sports betting.	4.42	.65
I can use my school fees on sports betting.	3.97	.71
I feel that I do not need education to make it in life due to sports betting.	4.04	.21

Source: Field Data 2022

Scale:

1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Uncertain,
 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

Mean of means = 4.22

Mean of standard deviation = 0.45

Table 4 shows that the students agreed with the majority of the claims that were put to them regarding the impact of sports betting on the academic performance of students in institutions of education, with a mean of 4.22 and a standard deviation of 0.45. Based on the replies recorded for each of the questions on the questionnaire that were presented to the respondents, the means and standard deviation were calculated. The paragraphs that follow go into further detail on each particular thing.

The majority of students believed that participating in sports betting hindered their academic achievement. As a result, the statement had a mean of 4.17 and a standard deviation of .41. According to Table 4, the majority of students firmly agreed that sports betting interferes with their ability to focus in class. The results showed a mean of 4.53 and a standard deviation of .63. Again, when asked if sports betting causes them to waste money that could have gone toward educational resources, the students agreed with the assertion. This item's mean score was 4.23 and its standard deviation was .36, indicating that the respondents in this case agreed with the statement. The students also concurred with Table 4's statement that they occasionally have to go without food when they gamble all of their money on sports. This is demonstrated by the item's mean score of 4.30 and standard deviation of .35. The

mean is roughly 4, indicating that the respondents approved of the assertion.

The majority of students agreed with the assertion that "Loss of sports bet puts me in such a foul mood that I am unable to learn." This is evident from the actualised mean of 4.07 and standard deviation of .28. The results' low standard deviation suggests that the replies were regarded as meaningful. The statement "I have lost interest in school owing to sports betting" had a mean of 4.42 and a standard deviation of .65 as well. This indicates that the statement was accepted by the majority of the students. This is because when compared to the scale in Table 4, the mean is scale 4 (agreed). The results show that the majority of students approved of using their tuition money for sports wagering. It is possible to deduce that the mean falls into the range of 4 with a mean of 3.97 and a standard deviation of .71 (agree). Again, when asked if they believed that sports betting rendered education unnecessary for them to succeed in life, the respondents concurred. Here, the statement had a mean of 4.04 and a standard deviation of .21. The results' low standard deviation suggests that the replies were regarded as meaningful.

It is clear from the foregoing discussions that sports betting has a detrimental impact on students' academic performance in colleges of education. This is based on research showing that sports betting decreases students' concentration in class, causes students to waste money that could have been used for educational resources, causes students to go hungry when they lose a bet and makes students so depressed that they are unable to learn. Once more, thanks to sports betting, students are willing to spend their tuition money on gambling, lose interest in school and believe that they do not need a degree to succeed in life.

DISCUSSION

On the effects of sports betting on the moral behaviours of students, it was found that the majority of students disagreed with the assertion that they thought sports betting was an immoral activity. This finding conflicts with that of Dunstan, who claims that because of its alleged immorality, sports betting was once mostly taboo in Ghana and many other African nations.³¹ Similar findings were found in Gainsbury et al. study on the impact of sports betting in Australia. They concluded that to increase their chances of winning, sports bettors had to invest more money. They eventually become dependent on the activity as a result of this.³² Again, when asked if sports betting can be addictive, the respondents firmly agreed with the claim. Reiss, who also holds this opinion, notes that subscribers can occasionally lose their possessions due to addiction to the behaviour. Others also commit the deed after developing an addiction to it.³³ Others develop an addiction to the practice, which leads them to kill themselves when they lose a bet. An instance is the case of the 30-year-old man who killed himself in 2011 in Accra as a result of a lost wager. The majority of respondents resoundingly agreed with the assertion that "Sports betting may be lucrative." This claim may also be explained by Grant et al., who came to the conclusion that sports gamblers keep placing wagers because of the potential financial rewards.³⁴

Concerning the motivations for sports betting among College of Education students, it was realised that sports betting provides an opportunity for people to make money to earn a living. This conclusion is in line with that of the Gaming Commission of Ghana, which found that sports betting in Ghana gives gamblers a chance to earn sizable sums of money. The same thing happened when the students were asked if they gambled on sports for entertainment purposes.³⁵ The replies concurred. This result is consistent with Amofa's assertion that some gamblers perceive sports wagering as a sort

³¹ Dunstan, *Gambling in California*.

³² Sally M Gainsbury et al., "The Prevalence and Determinants of Problem Gambling in Australia: Assessing the Impact of Interactive Gambling and New Technologies," *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors* 28, no. 3 (2014): 769.

³³ Reith, "Beyond Addiction or Compulsion: The Continuing Role of Environment in the Case of Pathological Gambling."

³⁴ Jon E. Grant et al., "Imaginal Desensitisation plus Motivational Interviewing for Pathological Gambling: Randomised Controlled Trial," *The British Journal of Psychiatry* 195, no. 3 (2009): 266–67.

³⁵ Gaming Commission of Ghana (Accra, 2017)

of recreation or amusement. When they are having fun, they are just content and pleased with betting. The students also concurred, according to Table 3, that they enjoyed betting on sports. The study conducted by Plotnik and Kouyoumdjian on 1,508 German bettors could provide an explanation for this claim.³⁶ The authors used sociological methods to reach the conclusion that youth in Germany started gambling on sports out of curiosity. Moreover, most of the students were engaged in gambling because their friends were also doing the same. This result supports Humphreys and Perez's claim that peer pressure was a factor in Canadian youth's decision to partake in sports betting.³⁷ The results show that the majority of students concurred that their purpose for participating in sports betting was to relieve stress. This assertion may also be explained by Grant et al., who concluded that sports gamblers keep placing wagers because of the potential financial rewards.

In relation to the effects of sports betting on the academic performance of students, it was found that the majority of students believed that participating in sports betting hindered their academic achievement. This discovery may be related to Binde's research on the effects of gambling in Europe.³⁸ He concluded that the actions of sports betting have a negative impact on sports bettors. The students also concurred with Table 4's statement that they occasionally have to go without food when they gamble all of their money on sports. This finding is consistent with the opinions of various experts who believe that sports betting has certain unfavourable effects, including social and financial costs to the bettors themselves that may affect their families and the general public.³⁹ The majority of students agreed with the assertion that "Loss of sports bet puts me in such a foul mood that I am unable to learn." Amofa holds the same opinion, claiming that some sports bettors develop an addiction to the activity and end their lives when they lose a wager.

SUMMARY

The study revealed that the students' opinions on the effects of sports betting on the moral behaviours of students were favourable. They believed that wagering on sports was not immoral, that it might be profitable, and that it was only beneficial to those who understood how it worked. The students weren't sure, though, whether gambling on sports was against their religious beliefs or if it was only for slothful people who didn't want to work. Despite these, the students mentioned that sports betting can be addictive, it is a very risky business, and people despise those that bet. Additionally, there were a variety of reasons why students bet on sports in institutes of education. Among the reasons given were that it gives people a chance to win money to support themselves, for fun, or as a pastime, and that the student started betting out of curiosity. Students gamble on sports because it is popular among their classmates, because it relieves tension and because it's a simple way to make money. Once more, students who attended colleges of education performed poorly academically as a result of sports betting. This is based on research showing that sports betting decreases students' concentration in class, causes students to waste money that could have been used for educational resources, causes students to go hungry when they lose a bet and makes students so depressed that they are unable to learn. Once more, thanks to sports betting, students are willing to spend their tuition money on gambling, lose interest in school and believe that they do not need a degree to succeed in life.

³⁶ Rod Plotnik and Haig Kouyoumdjian, *Introduction to Psychology* (Cengage Learning, 2013).

³⁷ Brad R Humphreys and Levi Perez, "A Microeconomic Analysis of Participation in Sports Betting Markets," *Economic Discussion Papers*, 2010.

³⁸ Per Binde, "Exploring the Impact of Gambling Advertising: An Interview Study of Problem Gamblers," *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction* 7 (2009): 541–54.

³⁹ Derevensky and Gupta, "Adolescents with Gambling Problems: A Synopsis of Our Current Knowledge"; Geneviève A Mageau et al., "Passion and Gambling: Investigating the Divergent Affective and Cognitive Consequences of Gambling 1," *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 35, no. 1 (2005): 100–118.

STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were made for policymakers:

1. It is recommended that Guidance and Counselling Units on Colleges of Education campuses run programs to inform students about exaggerated claims about the advantages of sports betting and what they really want to provide for their customers.
2. It is also recommended that Guidance and Counselling Units on College of Education campuses give students instruction in adaptive coping techniques so they may better manage their emotions and avoid turning to sports betting as a pastime or a method to pass the time. Again, it is advised that the current legislation be changed to tax sports bettors for national development because these bettors perceive benefits from sports betting, particularly financial gains.
3. The study recommends that the Gaming Commission together with the Guidance and Counselling Units of the Colleges of Education should start a public education campaign about the negative effects of sports betting.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the effects of sports betting on the moral behaviour of students in Colleges of Education in Ghana. Sports betting which is a form of gambling has become a permanent social activity in Ghana today and has engaged a majority of the youth. Sports betting is harmless fun for most people. However, it can become a destructive addiction for those who lose control of their gambling. There have been a myriad of social vices attached to the activity due to the high stakes involved. Students have become addicted to betting centres and use their school fees and pocket money gambling and others have dropped out of school to gamble away their future. A descriptive research design was adopted for the study using the multi-stage technique involving proportionate and simple random sampling procedures and three hundred and two (302) students from five colleges were selected for the study. As the data analysis revealed, students do not find the act to be an unethical means of making money but they on the other hand admitted that it is addictive and can cause more harm than good. From the foregoing, it is prudent for stakeholders in educational institutions to introduce appropriate policies and programmes as have been recommended to educate students on the harm of betting to ensure that they remain focused on their studies at all times. The Government also need to put in measures to curb this fast growing menace.

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